NOTES IN THE PROVINCES.

UPWARDS of 200*l.* have been subscribed towards the erection of new and enlarged schools at Melton, on the old site.——A correspondent informs us that the Leicester guardians have just entered into a contract with a gentleman of that town for the supply of gas at 2s. 9d. a thousand cubic feet. The tenders for gas-fittings sent for their approval were—Branley, 144*l.*; Robinson, 160*l.*; Barin, 168*l.*; and Saracens, 175*l.*——The *Hampshire Advertiser* states that the price of gas at Newport, Isle of Wight, is to be lowered *to* 7s.) and well it may, considering the terms on which the present lessee of the works has engaged to furnish the ready-made article to the company. From the local *Independent* and *Advertiser* we collect the following particulars. The contractors are to deliver a due quantity of pure gas through a station meter at the company's premises, the company providing the apparatus, but not the materials. The tenders received were the following:—

Mr. S. Wood, Wandsworth, 4s. 6d. per thousand the first year, 4s. the second, and 3s. 6d. the third			
Mr. James Durkin, Croydon ..	3s.	10d.	per thous.
Mr. Wilmer, Chesterfield	3	1½	,,
Mr. Mitchell Scott, London....	2	11	,,
Mr. Henry Bowen, Cardiff	2	11	,,
Mr. John Richardson, Wimborne	2	6	,,
Mr. Anthony Winderer, London	2	0	,,
Mr. George Miller, Newport ..	1	11½	,,
Mr. E. Kirkham, London	1	10½	,,
Mr. J. Richardson, Southampton	1	10	,,
Mr. George Wood, jun., Newport (*The present lessees' tender.*)	1	9	,,
Mr. J. B. Kennett, Newport ..	1	8	,,
Mr. G. Wood, jun., Newport ..	1	7	,,

The company decided to accept the tender of the present lessee to supply them at 4s. 9d. per thousand cubic feet. "After this exposition of the cost of procuring an article which has been charged to the consumers at about the rate of 10s., and only of late reduced to half that amount," says one of the papers just named, "we cannot feel much surprised at the forcible representations which from time to time have appeared in our columns, relative to the extravagance of the company's demands." As to quality the contractor is to be liable to fines on proved impurities of the gas, and as to quantity he will have an interest in giving a good supply. The only remark we are inclined at present to make on the preceding list is, that if gas contractors themselves differ so immensely in their estimate of the cost of gas, while the very man who knows most about the proper local cost is one of the readiest to offer one of the lowest estimates of that cost (his own profit of course inclusive), what reliance ought we to place on the assurances of any one, generally speaking (without special reference to local circumstances), that the present demands and expectations of the public at large are unreasonable, even though the assurer should happen to be a gas contractor or gas engineer, or to have other pretensions, as an authority, however practical?——The late Rev. Dr. Penrose, formerly fellow of New College, Oxford, is said to have bequeathed his collection of pictures and works on the fine arts, to the Oxford University galleries, and to the library of Sir Robert Taylor's Institution.——At Gloucester it is in contemplation to erect a new monument in commemoration of Bishop Hooper, in place of the old and insignificant one now standing in St. Mary's-square.——A Gothic monument has been erected in the Abbey Church, at Bath, to the memory of the late Mrs. S. Warner, who left 35,000*l.* three per cent. consols, upon trust, to provide annuities of 25*l.* each for poor widows reduced by misfortune.——The Swansea Docks are to be immediately proceeded with, so soon as tenders from several contractors are sent in. The subscription of the Marquis of Worcester as a shareholder is said to be now 10,000*l.*——Gas-works are shortly to be erected at the township of Droylsden, Ashton-under-Lyne.——Mr. Joseph Adshead's map of Manchester township, says the local *Spectator*, is on so large a scale, that every house and cottage in the township may be said to have its "local habitation" distinctly marked upon its enormous canvas surface, and a higglety-pigglety mass of brick and mortar it assuredly is, hardly one street of note as a through thoroughfare being found to run from either of the four cardinal points to the other, or parallel to any other street of similar importance. Besides the list of principal streets, Mr. Adshead intends to add the populations of the entire townships of Manchester and Salford forming the two boroughs, both in 1841 and 1851, as soon as the census is completed, so that the decennial progress of the population of the manufacturing capital will be made known to the visitors to the World's Industrial Exhibition, as the map will be sent to London.——A plan for new butchers' shambles, at Barnsley, has been furnished to the committee of that undertaking, by Mr. Billington, of Wakefield, architect.——Strenuous endeavours are now being made at Bradford to have the parish church rebuilt.——A new workhouse is about to be erected at Wakefield.——Messrs. Rae and Franks, of Hartlepool, have contracted to build a chapel in Dover-street there for the Wesleyan Methodist Reformers. The Primitive Methodists have purchased a site in Dock-street. In both these cases the Dock Company have returned one-half of the price of the ground to the purchasers.——The *Gateshead Observer* notices the opening of a new church at Shincliffe.——A tank is being formed at the Newcastle and Gateshead Union Gaslight Company's station, Forth Banks, for the erection of a large gasholder, capable of stowing about 360,000 cubic feet of gas. The tank, when finished, will be 102 feet diameter, 26 feet deep. The gasholder will be on the telescope principle, of 100 feet diameter, and 80 feet high, supported by eleven cast iron columns. From the gasholder a large main will communicate with the heart of the town, so as to insure an abundant supply of gas at all seasons of the year. Mr. Richard Coal is the contractor, and the work will be completed in time to be available for next winter's consumption.——The sculptured figure in Burns's Mausoleum at Dumfries is now being protected by shields of glass within the gate and other openings, so as to exclude the influence of the elements from the soft marble.——Plans have been prepared at Glasgow by Mr. C. Wilson for buildings about to be constructed at the back of the Royal Bank fronting Buchanan-street. The design is a combination of the Greek and Italian styles.——A new park at the west end of Glasgow is projected, to which a committee of the town council has recommended that body to contribute 10,000*l.*——Workmen are now engaged in placing a public clock with three dials in the spire of the Assembly Hall, Edinburgh.——Plans have been prepared of a tower to be placed on Greenside Church at Edinburgh, at a probable cost of about 960*l.* The council have to give their authority to proceed with it.——We would direct attention to an advertisement for designs for the *Bristol Athenæum*, the terms of which show a liberal and proper spirit on the part of the committee.

LAW MANAGEMENT OF BUILDING QUESTIONS.

AT a moment when the terrible evils and corruptions of the law in the hands of its professors in this country have come to such a pass, that the public more exposed to its pillaging chicaneries,—that is, the trading and commercial public in general,—find it beyond all further endurance, and are now taking strenuous measures for the obviation of these mischiefs by the substitution of commercial tribunals to which every man of common sense and right feeling will most thankfully resort in all differences and disputes,—it is a hard case certainly that the meubus is to be mounted on the metropolitan building trades in the shape of law judges and attorneys for the discussion and *settlement* (or else not) of the many questions involved in the technical details and pursuits of their own peculiar arts and businesses. The longer we reflect on this subject the more necessary it seems to become to resist this meditated injustice in the name of justice, and the more so since we see that calculating members of "the profession"—which really appears to have peculiar pretensions to an absorbing and omnivorous a title—already have their eye on the new prey that is in preparation for them in the carcase of the Buildings' Bill which we last week dissected. Not even satisfied that the judge should be a lawyer, and that none but barristers and attorneys should be entitled to conduct and plead the cause of builders or others subject to the rule of this builders' court, the *Legal Observer* thinks that "it seems but consistent and reasonable that the clerk and the deputy-clerk should be attorneys also." Surely it is but reasonable that "the profession," if they *are* to have the building trades as their lawful prey, should be entitled to pick even the bones. That our own professions and trades will thus indeed become a prey, who can doubt who knows anything of the practice of the law,—who can doubt who knows anything of what the honourable members of the profession themselves admit and deplore? "Our system of law," says the attorney-general himself, Sir John Romilly, "is technical, *invented* FOR THE CREATION OF COSTS, and *not* for the due administration of JUSTICE." Yes, and an antidote, even, for the bane is pointed out by another eminent and honourable person, namely, Lord Overstone, who recently remarked to the author of an able tract on "Tribunals of Commerce," Mr. Francis Lyne, whose *exposé* we commend to the perusal of all amongst our own professions and trades who wish to know a little more on this interesting subject,—that "any plan of a practicable character, by which the administration of the law may be rendered more prompt, certain, and less costly, or by which reasonable arbitration may be established for legal redress, would be a great benefit to the trading and commercial world," and that his lordship "sincerely wished success to every effort which might have this object in view." It is not exactly commercial tribunals we are treating of at present, but after such implied as well as expressed opinions, how can we be otherwise than most jealous of such provisions, in our new Buildings Bill, as will place us at the mercy of the technicalities, quibbles, and delays, of a law court.

PROPOSED NEW YORK OPERA HOUSE.

IT is proposed to erect an opera house in New York to seat 4,000 persons. It will be bounded by four wide streets and have a front of 197 feet by an average depth of 217 feet.

The first tier of boxes and the parquet are entered on a level with the street. Viewed from the parquet, the house presents four other tiers of boxes, the front of each retreating behind the one immediately below it, each having its open balcony.

A system of ventilating, with warm air in winter, and with air artificially cooled to any required temperature in summer, forms a part of the design. It is designed with double-cased windows and extra doors to exclude entirely the external sultry air of summer, to exhaust continually the foul air, and to supply in its place an adequate quantity of pure air artificially cooled.

It is proposed, by the use of iron for the stairways and in other parts of the building for which it may be available, and by coating all the stage frame-work with a recently discovered incombustible paint, to render the whole structure nearly fire-proof.

The cost of the land and the estimated cost of the building, furnished for use, are between 250,000 and 300,000 dollars. Of this the projector is to furnish one-half, and hopes to raise the remainder by leasing 250 seats for 99 years for 500 dollars each.

THE SLATE TRADE.—A considerable increase has taken place in the export of slates from the quarries in North Wales—a circumstance justly attributed to the removal of the brick duty causing an impetus to the erection of houses.

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